



REPORT
ON THE
HEALTH OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH
OF WEST BROMWICH,

FOR THE YEAR 1906, BY
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BARRISTER-AT-LAW,

Medical Officer of Health to the Borough.

TO WHICH ARE APPENDED THE REPORTS OF THE SANITARY
INSPECTOR, FOOD AND DRUGS INSPECTOR, AND PUBLIC
ANALYST.

WEST BROMWICH:

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MUNICIPAL BOROUGH OF WEST BROMWICH.

Population, 1901 Census	65,170
Estimated Population, 1906	68,469
Area	...	...	...	5,860 acres

Rateable Value of Property assessed to the				
Relief of the Poor, November, 1906	...	£227,251	5	0

Rateable Value of Property assessed to the				
General District Rate, November, 1906		£208,114	16	3

Number of Houses in the Borough,				
November, 1906	...	...	...	14,492

*TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
SANITARY COMMITTEE OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH
OF WEST BROMWICH.*

GENTLEMEN,

In offering to you my Seventeenth Annual Report upon the health and sanitary condition of West Bromwich, I venture to call your attention to the fact that I have now completed a term of service equal to that of your late Medical Officer, my father, who was appointed in November, 1872. In looking back over the statistics from the year 1872 to the present time, I find much that might be said, but shall content myself with calling your attention to one or two salient points. The population was then 48,630; it is now 69,000; showing an increase of 20,000 souls. There were, however, actually more deaths every year from 1872 to 1880 than are recorded in the present report for 1906. During those years Scarlet Fever claimed an average of 63 deaths per annum, and nothing was done for it; Smallpox, in spite of what was supposed to be efficient vaccination, was accountable for an average of nearly twenty deaths a year, and perhaps some which are not reported also; Typhoid Fever, which in those days was less recognised and more seldom diagnosed than at present, averaged 23 deaths a year. More than half the population drank water from wells polluted with sewage; there was no deep drainage and what drains there were ran down the gutters until they reached the Tame; there was no Mortuary, no notification of disease, no Isolation Hospital, and no systematic supervision of food or milk. And yet much good work was done. Then, as now, gradually and by steady stages the town progressed in prosperity and in sanitation, and if there were space here to write more in detail even the sceptical would be convinced.

Introductory

Much has been done during my seventeen years; much is yet to be done. The provision of a refuse destructor, the gradual abolition of the privy midden and with it of the horrible pollution of the air by night, the complete equipment of the Sanitary Department with its own carts, horses and men, so that the contractor may disappear and the town do its own work

Improve-
ments

Improve-
ments

and save expense, and perhaps at last the provision of offices in which the Medical Officer and the Sanitary Inspector can conduct the business of the department in the same decent manner that other heads of departments are able to do:—all these things are among my visions of the near future.

The money expended by the Sanitary Committee does not carry interest nor contribute to the rates; they spend and do not apparently earn any profit for the town; but I am sure that the result can be expressed in terms more eloquent than mere figures, in the increased well-being of the people, in longer and healthier lives, and in a great and ever-increasing ability to work for the common improvement of the whole body municipal.

In conclusion I have to thank the Committee for many courtesies, for my visit to the Congress at Bristol, and for the permission to take a long holiday to attend the Sanitary Section of the Congress in Toronto, where I learned much of Canadian and American methods of sanitary work. I also wish to record the loyalty and efficiency of my Chief Inspector and his staff.

I have the honour to remain,

Yours faithfully,

HERBERT MANLEY,

M.A., M.D., D.P.H., ETC., ETC., BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The population, as estimated by the Authorities at Somerset House, amounts to 68,470; but, as will be seen from a reference to the table given in the annual report for 1901, this is greatly in excess of the last intercensal growth, and is apparently based upon certain factors of births, deaths and removals which are not accessible to the un-official eye. The problem of our vanishing people has been before me for many years, and although houses appear to increase and new streets grow up, the number of children on the school books affords a practical test, which shows that we lose a large number of our people of whom no account is taken, and who pass away in search of better trade or more congenial surroundings.

Population

Our births for the year amount to 2,171, and show a birth-rate of 31.6, which is only three less than the rate of the preceding ten years; it is much in excess of the rates for England and Wales or for the 76 great towns among which we are included by the Registrar-General, as will be seen from the Table A following. It is now desired by the Authorities that statistics should be given of those born out of wedlock, and in West Bromwich there were registered 100 cases, or rather less than five per cent. of the total births.

Births

The death-rate continues to show a gratifying decrease, even at a time when a falling death-rate is to be found all over England. The number of deaths recorded was 1,205, of which 142 were those of persons residing outside the Borough, but taking advantage of the Workhouse, or one of the Hospitals, and there ending their days. Of our own people, 12 were reported as dying elsewhere, 11 in the various institutions of Birmingham and one in Walsall. The net death-rate among our own residents only amounted to 15.6, as compared with an average for the past ten years of 18.3, and with the rate for England and Wales of 15.4, and for the 76 towns of 16.0 per 1,000. It is interesting to note that both the total deaths and the death-rate when corrected are the lowest ever recorded in our sanitary history.

Deaths

The number of deaths under one year of age are not yet so satisfactory, and there were registered 347 deaths at this early age, giving a ratio of deaths to births of 159 per 1,000. This,

Deaths

though it is below the average of the past ten years, is still much above some of our former returns, and needs a good deal of attention from the sanitary officers. The similar return for the 76 towns is only 146, and for the whole of England and Wales 133, so that there is evidently work to be done.

An analysis of the causes of death of these 347 children is not without interest, as it will be noticed that they constitute nearly one-third of the total deaths. No less than 67 died within a short time of birth, either from premature appearance in this world or from some congenital malformation over which no preventive control could be exercised; and convulsions, for which in many cases no accurate cause can be assigned, carried off 29. The 39 children who died of "Atrophy, Debility or Marasmus," could very probably have many of them been saved by proper food and judicious nursing, and the death roll from Lung Diseases (no less than 64) tells a tale of unnecessary exposure to cold air and of perambulators standing outside shops and public-houses, and shows a want of care on the part of our mothers. Diarrhœa was the cause of 59 deaths, and probably a large number of these could have been saved by a little help and instruction, while it is always a question how far the 29 cases of death from infantile tuberculosis could be modified by treatment.

Zymotic
Disease

The deaths from Zymotic Disease total up to 141, and are classified as follows:—Diarrhœa, 65; Whooping Cough, 46; Typhoid, 13; Measles, 7; Scarlet Fever, 4; Diphtheria, 4; and Croup, 2.

Diarrhœa

Some mention has already been made of Diarrhœa, under the heading of infantile ailments, and considering the severe heat of the past autumn, the number of deaths is not high, but is important in having fallen entirely upon the infant population; anything like English Cholera was conspicuous by its absence.

Measles

Measles, after the disastrous experience of 1905, is naturally at the bottom of its cycle, and has fallen to seven, previous low records occurring in 1904, 1901, and 1899, and thus restoring the average number of deaths to its proper place in the statistical record. At the time of writing this report, there are signs of an outbreak on the Rowley and Tipton boundaries, and probably there will be a considerable rise in the Measles death-roll for 1907.

Whooping Cough had more than its due last year, and its severity depends very much upon the weather at the time of its occurrence. It does not yet seem possible to do anything of a really practical character for either of these diseases, except to appoint special nurses for their supervision and treatment; they rarely come under the notice of the doctor until they show signs of becoming fatal.

Whooping
Cough

Croup and Diphtheria are rare in West Bromwich, and as six cases died out of 18 reported, it may be assumed that when it does occur it is of a very bad type. Its rarity is beyond dispute.

Croup and
Diphtheria

ENGLAND AND WALES, 1906.

	Annual rates per 1000 living.				Infant	
	Births.		Deaths.		Zymotic Deaths.	mortality per 1000 births.
England and Wales	27.0	...	15.4	...	1.73	133
76 Great Towns	27.9	...	16.0	...	2.24	146
West Bromwich	31.6	...	15.6	...	2.05	159

The Borough Coroner held 73 inquests, and 17 deaths are returned as uncertified, which is rather a high proportion as compared with the returns of former years. It cannot, however, be denied that some reform in the procedure of the Coroner is sure to be carried out in a few years, and that "uncertified" does not by any means imply that no enquiry has been made into the cause of death, but rather the reverse; indeed, the "uncertified" death has very often a great deal more light thrown upon it than the death in which a note is given on a comparatively brief knowledge of the deceased and without an inspection of the dead body.

Inquests

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

During 1906 340 cases of infectious disease have been reported to the Authority. This includes Scarlet Fever, 162; Typhoid Fever, 42; Diphtheria, 14; Croup, 4; Puerperal Fever, 3; and Erysipelas, 115.

The value of the reports of Erysipelas is very small, as they occur almost exclusively in the practices of one or two medical men, and are usually when investigated found to be of a trivial character. As long as the disease is included in the statute,

Erysipelas

Erysipelas

it is necessary for the Sanitary Authorities to receive and register the reports and for the Borough to pay for them, however valueless, on this occasion to the extent of £14 odd.

Typhoid
Fever

Special attention has been given to the cases of Typhoid Fever, both as regards their origin and their treatment, and every effort has been made to provide them with either Hospital accommodation or the benefit of skilled nursing at home, where the Medical Attendant does not object to the attendance of the nurses of the District Nursing Home. Six cases arose in the Workhouse, and belonged, four of them to Wednesbury, one to Tipton, and one to Pontypridd; none of these were removed. Three of them proved fatal, in spite of the surroundings and attention devoted to them. Of the remainder, 15 were removed to the Infectious Hospital and two died; and 21 were nursed at home, with eight deaths. Seventeen cases occurred in the Great Bridge district, but the disease was never allowed to get a footing, although a large number of cases continued to occur in Tipton, and there was a constant dread of invasion. Of the fatal cases, one was undoubtedly due to eating shell fish, and one or two died with such rapidity that the diagnosis was hardly established. One case was imported from a distance, and one or two cases were traced to neighbouring towns. One doubtful case was removed to Hospital, but showed little or no signs of Typhoid when under hourly observation, while other details were elicited from the patient which cleared up the case.

The use of the Hospital for Typhoid Fever is now thoroughly established, and will, I believe, do much to prevent the extension of the disease in poor and dirty neighbourhoods, while the rapid progress which is being made with the abolition of the middens, coupled with the provision of a destructor or destructors, will yet abolish the name of Typhoid Fever out of West Bromwich.

Diphtheria

One case of Diphtheria was taken into the Hospital under stress of circumstances. A case of Diphtheria was notified at a butcher's shop in the person of an assistant residing at Wednesbury and under the care of a doctor in Smethwick. The case was verified by bacteriological examination, and efforts were made to get the patient taken either to his own home, or to his friends in Smethwick, or into the Workhouse Infirmary. As all these failed, and as the danger of further infection

seemed great, it was decided to take him into a small ward at the Infectious Hospital, where he fortunately made a speedy recovery. Diphtheria

THE BOROUGH HOSPITALS.

The necessity for opening the new building in Friar Park has not yet arisen: may the day be far distant. The duties of the caretaker and his wife continue to be efficiently performed, and the buildings are kept in good order. The Matron and Medical Officer pay periodical visits for the purpose of taking inventories and general supervision.

During the year Miss Smith, the Hospital Matron, has obtained a similar but more lucrative post at Burton-on-Trent, and her place has been taken by Miss Davis, formerly of Norwich, who is a thorough and efficient head of the Institution.

The Committee have decided to expend a sum not exceeding £800 on certain necessary improvements to the administrative block at the Fever Hospital. These additions have been before the Committee for some time and are in no way connected with the fact that our Hospital takes cases from Handsworth. Institutions of this character are usually built to supply accommodation at the rate of one bed per thousand population, and we are slightly below that standard. It is true that the Hospital is rarely full, but it must be remembered that it is built to prevent its being filled and not to be filled. The accommodation hitherto provided for the staff of nurses has been poor in the extreme, and the use of one room as a dining room, recreation room, and waiting room for the parents of patients struck the Committee as a grave discomfort. In addition to this, at the present time three of the maids are camped out in a building intended for isolation purposes, and one is sleeping at the Porter's Lodge, an arrangement which is most improper. There is only one bath room for the whole of the staff and a grave lack of store cupboards. Improvements

During the year 232 cases have been admitted to the Hospital, of which 73 belonged to Handsworth and 12 to the district of Perry Barr. Of the 147 cases admitted from our own Borough, 131 were Scarlet Fever, 15 were Typhoid, and one, of which mention has been made above, was a case of Diphtheria. Cases Admitted

Deaths

Nine deaths were recorded, two from Typhoid Fever and the rest from Scarlet Fever, showing a case death-rate from Scarlet Fever of 3.2 per 1,000, which will bear comparison with similar institutions elsewhere. There were nine deaths in the Borough, including the Hospital cases, which gives a case death-rate of 5.5 per 1,000.

The Hospital will again be available for the isolation of Scarlet Fever and Typhoid Fever, and should the necessity arise, your Medical Officer will be prepared to isolate cases of Epidemic Cerebro-spinal Meningitis or "Spotted Fever."

THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

Sickness

The regular examination of children who are stated to be absent from school from illness has been continued during the year, and 75 children have passed under observation at the request of the attendance officers. In addition to this, 12 truants have been examined at the Workhouse, and visits have been paid to the schools when requested by the Education Department.

Your Medical Officer was called upon to investigate the conditions under which a visitation of sore throat had attacked Spon Lane School, and a careful examination disclosed serious defects in the system of drainage, which were seen by the Committee and ordered for immediate repair. In addition to this, the arrangements for ventilating the class-rooms seemed to be inadequate and uncertain in their working.

Eye Disease

Towards the close of the year the Committee called the attention of your Medical Officer to the number of cases which seemed to need treatment for some form of eye disease. A number of children were seen and tested and your Medical Officer prepared a report, in which such cases were divided into four classes:—

1. Cases of defective eyesight, which could be remedied by the provision of proper glasses.
2. Cases of defects in the eyeball, arising from injury or disease, which required the attention of a skilled oculist.
3. Cases of disease in or about the eye, which could be treated by the family doctor.

4. Cases in which the eyesight showed a constitutional weakness, and general rather than special treatment was needed.

Eye Disease

This report has been considered by the Committee, and steps are now being taken to ascertain the extent to which these conditions prevail among the school children of the Borough. Unfortunately, the law does not yet recognise the necessity for the medical examination of the children (as was proposed by the Education Bill of last year), nor is the Committee empowered to expend money upon the provision of spectacles and other matters. Further, it is an open question whether much may not be done by awakening the parents to a sense of their responsibility in this matter, without throwing a large expenditure upon the ratepayers.

It will, of course, be seen that this examination is putting a new and onerous duty upon the shoulders of your Medical Officer, and that it does not come within the scope of the resolution of October, 1889, under which the old School Board appointed the Medical Officer of Health to act as their medical examiner, but at present it is too soon to predict what duties will fall under this head, and the best way is to do what is necessary for the immediate needs of the moment.

The investigation of all cases of defective and epileptic children, the examination—and in most cases the exclusion—of children suffering from Pulmonary Phthisis with expectoration, and the general supervision of children with any physical defect, afford a large scope for work. It remains to be seen what policy it will be possible or advisable for the Committee to pursue in the cases of which it will receive reports from time to time.

GENERAL SANITARY WORK.

The improvement of the sanitary state of the Borough continues steadily and quietly, and it will be seen from the figures presented by the Chief Sanitary Inspector at what rate of progress we are travelling. The process of converting the privies of a large town to the water-carriage system must of necessity be a gradual one, for not only has the work to be done upon the premises, but the evolution of the treatment of the sewage must be considered. The process of conversion is now so far advanced that it has become advisable, if not necessary,

Conversion of
Privies

Destructors

for the Council to consider the erection of one or more destructors for the reception of the dry refuse and ashes unmixed with any nightsoil or fæcal matter. The absence of nightsoil from the site will of course make the choice of a suitable and accessible place more easy, and at the same time it will be wise to take into account the need of providing accommodation or at least a site for stables, etc., so that we may no longer be dependent upon contractors. It is fairly obvious that if it pays the contractors it will pay the Corporation.

Over-crowding

There is still a certain amount of overcrowding, but it is probable that with a better prospect of trade it will decrease; certainly from a statistical point of view there is no need for overcrowding. The provision of Bye-laws for the better supervision of "Houses Let in Lodgings" may also be trusted to assist the officials in this direction.

Workshops

The condition of the workshops has received attention during the year, and the relations between the Government Inspector of Factories and the Department leaves nothing to be desired. One interesting case was undertaken by the Inspector in conjunction with your Medical Officer, and is worth a detailed report.

The case was one in which the business of rag and bone sorting was being carried on in a hovel by the road side without proper license and under very unsuitable conditions. The buildings consisted of wooden uprights filled in and roofed with corrugated, galvanised iron of a worn-out nature, and were practically open to the weather except where holes had been plugged with rags. The privy accommodation was of a very primitive character, and in an offensive state. As it seemed to me that nothing short of complete closure of the premises would suffice, I induced the Inspector to proceed under Section 18 of the Factory Act, 1901, with the permission of the Chief Inspector of Factories and the Sanitary Authority. Evidence in support of the case was given by the Medical Officer and Sanitary Inspector, and the Stipendiary Magistrate, while admitting that he was unfamiliar with the procedure under this section, gave us a closing order, which was suspended for one month to allow the owner to find other premises. This has now been done, and the business has been removed beyond our jurisdiction.

One case has arisen during the year under the provisions of the Midwives' Act. A case of death after operation was reported to me by the Senior Obstetric Surgeon of a Birmingham Hospital, and the matter was investigated by the Committee. Under the circumstances of the complaint, it was decided to report the case to the Central Midwives Board, but no communication has been received from the Board as to the result of their enquiry. This method does not encourage any further application to them in such cases.

Midwives'
Act

The remaining matters of sanitary interest are fully dealt with in the reports which are appended, and especial notice may be drawn to the enquiry into the use of preservatives in canned foods, and the milk, which is supplied to the Borough chiefly from Shropshire and the North of Staffordshire.

TABLE I.—VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT DURING 1906 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Births.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.					Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District	Deaths of Non- residents registered in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.	Nett Deaths at all ages belonging to the District.	
		Number	Rate.	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.		Number				Rate.	
				Number	Rate per 1000 Births registered	Number	Rate.						
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	
1896	62350	2198	35.2	399	181	1350	21.5	236	102	No return previous to 1904.	1248	20.0	
1897	62920	2280	36.4	398	175	1347	21.4	239	104		1243	19.7	
1898	63490	2269	35.7	415	182	1360	21.4	239	112		1148	18.0	
1899	64060	2364	36.8	425	179	1307	20.4	207	99		1200	18.8	
1900	64630	2242	34.2	439	191	1453	22.4	256	106		1347	20.8	
1901	65200	2229	34.0	363	163	1211	18.5	205	88		1123	17.2	
1902	65910	2287	34.6	372	162	1433	21.7	255	126		1307	19.3	
1903	66560	2193	33.9	376	164	1199	18.1	223	106		1093	16.3	
1904	67190	2254	33.5	337	149	1172	17.4	239	103	7	1076	15.9	
1905	67820	2137	31.5	321	150	1255	18.5	280	127	6	1134	16.7	
Averages for years 1896-1905		2245	34.6	384	170	1309	20.1	238	107		1192	18.3	
1906	68470	2171	31.6	347	159	1205	17.5	272	142	12	1075	15.6	

TABLE II.

I. Institutions within the District receiving sick and infirm persons from outside the District.	II. Institutions outside the District receiving sick and infirm persons from the District.
Union Workhouse	Children's Hospital, Birmingham
Poor Law Schools	Queen's Hospital, Birmingham
Sandwell Asylum	General Hospital, Birmingham
Infectious Hospital	Private Hospital, Birmingham
Smallpox Hospital	Private Hospital, Handsworth
District Hospital	

TABLE III.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING
THE YEAR 1906.

Notifiable Disease.					Cases notified in whole District, at all Ages.	No. of Cases removed to Hospital.
Smallpox	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Cholera	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	14	1
Membranous Croup	...	...	...	...	4	Nil
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	115	Nil
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	162	131
Typhus Fever	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Enteric Fever	...	...	...	...	42	Nil
Relapsing Fever	...	...	...	...	Nil	15
Continued Fever	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	...	3	Nil
Plague	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Total	...	...	...	...	540	147

TABLE IV.

CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH DURING YEAR 1906.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Deaths in or belonging to whole District at subjoined Ages.							Total Deaths in Public Institu- tions in the District
	All Ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and up- wards	
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
Measles	6	2	4	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	5	...	5	...	...	...	...	7
Whooping Cough	46	21	23	2	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria and Mem- branous Croup	4	...	4	...	...	...	...	...
Croup	2	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Enteric Fever	13	...	1	3	5	4	...	4
Epidemic Influenza	9	...	1	...	...	7	1	...
Diarrhœa	72	59	10	...	...	2	1	1
Enteritis	9	...	9	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Fever	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Erysipelas	3	...	...	...	1	2	...	...
Other Septic Diseases	2	1	...	...	...	1	...	6
Phthisis	54	2	1	2	8	41	...	25
Other Tubercular Dis- eases	51	29	12	6	3	1	...	2
Cancer, Malignant Dis- ease	41	...	..	...	1	23	17	12
Bronchitis	125	39	15	2	2	30	37	20
Pneumonia	92	23	25	2	5	28	9	6
Pleurisy	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	2
Other Diseases of Res- piratory Organs	4	3	...	...	...	1	...	...
Alcoholism—Cirrhosis of Liver	8	...	...	...	...	8	...	...
Venereal Diseases	2	1	1	...	...	...	...	2
Premature Birth	52	52	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diseases and Accidents of Parturition	8	3	...	...	5	...	...	...
Heart Diseases	36	...	1	3	3	25	4	12
Accidents	32	4	6	5	...	11	6	32
Suicides	8	...	...	...	2	5	1	2
All Other Causes	389	108	26	7	4	108	136	139
All Causes	1075	347	147	32	39	298	212	272

TABLE V.

INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1906.

Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.				Under 1 Week	1-2 Weeks	2-3 Weeks	3-4 Weeks	Total under 1 Month	1-2 Months	2-3 Months	3-4 Months	4-5 Months	5-6 Months	6-7 Months	7-8 Months	8-9 Months	9-10 Months	10-11 Months	11-12 Months	Total Deaths under 1 Year
ALL CAUSES	{	Certified ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	339
		Uncertified	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	3	3	1	5	3	1	1	1	1	1	...	21
Diarrhoea, all forms	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	2	8	4	5	8	6	8	4	5	3	4	2	59
Gastritis, Gastro-intestinal Catarrh	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Premature Birth	...	...	...	36	9	2	2	49	2	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	52
Congenital Defects	...	...	...	8	1	...	...	9	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Injury at Birth	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus	...	...	...	9	3	3	...	15	10	2	2	3	1	1	1	3	1	...	...	39
Tuberculous Meningitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	...	1	.	1	3	...	2	2	1	13
Tuberculous Peritonitis: Tabes Mesenterica	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	1	1	1	1	...	...	1	...	1	...	7
Other Tuberculous Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	..	...	3	1	2	...	...	1	...	9
Rickets	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	1	1	1	...	...	...	6
Meningitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	2
Convulsions	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	4	5	5	4	2	1	4	...	1	1	...	2	29
Bronchitis	...	...	...	2	1	1	2	6	1	4	7	2	1	5	5	...	1	5	4	41
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	3	1	3	1	...	3	2	4	1	2	2	23
Suffocation, overlying	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Other Causes	...	...	...	3	2	2	1	8	6	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	...	25
				64	19	11	7	101	43	24	28	27	19	26	20	18	12	18	11	347

TABLE VI.

PARTICULARS AS TO ACTIONS TAKEN UNDER
FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT, 1901.*No. of Workshops on Register at end of 1906:—*

Workshop Bakehouses...	...	...	...	82
Breeze Banks	...	...	...	9
Dressmaking and Tailoring Establishments			...	28
Miscellaneous Trades ...	...	...	...	47
Total				166

PARTICULARS OF DEFECTS FOUND.

Nuisances under Public Health Acts:—

Want of Cleanliness	...	...	...	12
Sanitary Accommodations—				
Unsuitable or Defective	...	...	...	1
Total				13

Two references were made by H.M. Inspector as to matters remediable under the Public Health Acts, but not under the Factory Acts.

Sanitary Inspector's Report,

FOR THE YEAR 1906.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

INTRODUCTION.

For the eighth time I have the honour to submit my Annual Report as Sanitary Inspector for the County Borough of West Bromwich.

On the occasion of my last Annual Report, I had to direct your attention to the fact that for certain special reasons the number of sanitary improvements effected was not quite so large as in preceding years, but I am glad to be able to report on the present occasion that this temporary check has not been sustained, and that a large number of valuable structural improvements have been carried out without, however, any serious friction being occasioned.

GENERAL SANITARY WORK.

INSPECTIONS.

In addition to the investigation of complaints respecting overcrowding and the existence of insanitary conditions in dwelling houses, numerous systematic investigations of properties in all parts of the district have been undertaken, and owing to such visits a large number of remediable defects were discovered and dealt with. With a view to inducing occupiers to take an interest in maintaining the cleanliness of outbuildings and keeping in order sanitary conveniences, the various common yards are visited monthly, more frequent visits, however, being necessary in some few cases, where the slightest relaxation of supervision is at once followed by slackness. Under the foregoing heads 9,487 inspections have been made.

DRAIN TESTING.

During the year eight drains have been opened out and tested in detail with the smoke generator, the "Eclipse" testing machine. Included in this list is one of the Council Schools, in connection with which a special report was made to the Education Committee. The apparatus again proved most serviceable in locating defects which were not perceptible by visual inspection.

NOTICES SERVED.

In addition to the special reports or letters forwarded to owners or occupiers by request respecting sanitary defects, 1506 preliminary notices have also been served, particulars of which are set out in Table II.

The premises in respect to which notices were served were subsequently re-visited either by the District Inspectors or myself, 4,145 re-inspections being made. In most cases these preliminary notices were sufficient to bring about abatement of nuisances, but some 179 statutory notices were served on your instructions. Of such notices, 118 were given under the Public Health Acts, and 61 under sections of the West Bromwich Corporation Act, 1900.

SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS EFFECTED.

Table III. gives details of the sanitary improvements effected as a result of action taken by the department. The improvements number 3,337, the number of nuisances abated being 2,423.

Filthy and Dilapidated Houses and Outbuildings.

Two hundred and twenty-five houses, some of which were in a very filthy and dilapidated state, have been cleansed and limewashed, the internal brickwork, plastering, flooring and woodwork receiving attention in 79 cases.

Ninety-three outbuildings have also been limewashed and repaired, and it is pleasing to note that several owners are at last beginning to realise that the old insanitary brick sink, with no suitable pipe outlet, is a most unsatisfactory structure, if only in view of the fact that the continued percolation of water from the old defective joints of these sinks into the brick-

work of the wash house occasions considerable damage. As a result, several owners have substituted earthenware sinks with suitable pipe outlets.

Surface Paving and Drainage of Yards.

The surface paving in 24 yards has been extended, relaid, or repaired, but with the gradual displacement of the old system of surface channels, greater progress should be possible in this respect in future years. Hitherto it has not been deemed desirable to press for the paving of yards when drainage operations were contemplated. This work of replacing the surface channels by proper systems of covered drainage is proceeding most satisfactorily, 130 yards serving 421 houses having been properly drained during the year, 20 of which were previously unconnected with the sewer, most of these latter cases coming from the Dial Lane district. In connection with the new systems of drainage, 142 inspection chambers and 380 additional gullies were fixed.

Disused Wells.

Several additions have been made to the list of disused wells kept by the department, but, on the other hand, a considerable number have been filled in, but not in some instances until after narrow escapes to life and limb had been experienced. Not only have several collapses occurred where wooden coverings had decayed, but in other cases even iron plates were found to be inadequate, owing to the sides of the well collapsing. The District Inspectors keep under close observation all wells in common yards and report all cases of subsidence, no matter how trifling in character.

Privy and Water-closet Accommodation.

One hundred and forty-three notices were served with respect to foul and dilapidated or leaking privies. In 30 instances temporary measures were resorted to, but the futility of such procedure is becoming more generally recognised, our experience going to show that where considerable amounts have been expended in endeavouring to render middens watertight, the result aimed at is seldom achieved for more than a very limited period, and that even where surface percolations have

been temporarily remedied, the concealed but really more dangerous type of leakage, viz., that into the subsoil, goes on unchecked.

It is therefore gratifying to note that the work of conversion still proceeds steadily and with a singular absence of friction, and that during the past year 368 privies have been replaced by 386 water-closets. All the water-closets so fixed were provided with suitable flushing cisterns.

Fifty-nine official representations were made under Section 66 of the West Bromwich Corporation Act, 1900, but in seven instances only was it found necessary to execute the work in default.

OCCUPIERS' NOTICES.

Whilst considerable attention has of necessity been directed to securing the abatement of structural defects for which owners are responsible, the fact that out of the 1,506 notices served 638 were addressed to occupiers, shows that tenants have also been made aware of their responsibilities. Of the notices so served, most had relation to overcrowding and the filthy state of houses and outbuildings. Some of the overcrowding cases were of a very flagrant character, one of the worst met with being as follows:—In a single-roomed tenement five adults (three males and two females) were known to be both living and sleeping, and it is believed that three other adults also at times used the house for sleeping purposes.

Owing to the refusal of the tenants of a property in Cape Street, Greets Green, to cleanse a sanitary convenience used by them, it was found necessary to issue a summons, whereupon the work of cleansing was carried out.

In a large number of cases, where difficulty was experienced in deciding as to responsibility for choked drains or closets, and where the stoppage was of a temporary character, the yard gully or closet was plunged by one of the District Inspectors.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

Summonses with respect to five properties were issued under the Public Health Acts, the owners being concerned in four instances and the occupiers in the remaining case, particulars of which have already been given.

In the first-named cases, no attempts were made to contest the existence of nuisances on the premises concerned, the defendants in three instances executing the necessary works and paying the Court fees, when the summonses were withdrawn; whilst in the fourth case an order for the execution of the works specified in the notice served and for payment of costs was made.

WATER SUPPLY.

Nine samples of water from wells were taken and submitted to the Borough Analyst for examination, favourable reports being received in four instances. In three cases polluted wells have been closed and water laid on from the main.

Owing to the very inadequate supply of water in the neighbourhood of Florence and Mary Roads, enquiries were made into the matter, and it was found that the insufficient supply was not due so much to poor pressure in the main as to the small size of the respective service pipes which had to supply a large number of houses. Authority was accordingly taken for proceedings against the owners under Section 62 of the West Bromwich Corporation Act, 1900, but this step was rendered unnecessary, the owners providing new service pipes, the result being that the difficulty was overcome. A similar procedure, with a similar result, was also adopted with respect to property in Roebuck Street.

INSPECTION OF SLAUGHTER-HOUSES AND FOOD SUPPLY.

There are now 37 slaughter-houses on the register, of which 13 are subject to annual licenses. An annual license for a new slaughter-house, erected in lieu of an old licensed slaughter-house which had been demolished, was granted.

The Meat Inspector has systematically visited all the slaughter-houses, 1,761 visits having been made, and he has inspected 1,634 sides and 938 quarters of beef, 4,282 carcasses of calves, sheep, lambs or pigs, in addition to a large number of live animals. Six carcasses of beef were found to be affected with localised tuberculosis, and the diseased portions of the carcasses were subsequently removed and destroyed.

In four other cases the slaughtered animals were found to have been respectively suffering from hydatid cysts, pleurisy, abscesses, and pericarditis, and here again the affected organs were seized.

In two cases seizures were made, one being from a slaughter-house and the other from the barrow of a hawker. In both cases the vendors were cautioned.

The total amount of meat voluntarily surrendered or destroyed was 3 cwt. 22 lbs.

During the year 2,019 visits have been paid to butchers' shops, and 644 visits to fish, game and poultry, and green-grocers' shops.

INSPECTION OF BAKEHOUSES.

There are now 82 bakehouses on the register, and these are regularly visited. Whitewashing is carried out systematically, and in two instances, where there was a loft with open floor boarding immediately above the kneading boards, the boards were properly sealed in.

INSPECTION OF COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS.

Fifteen applications were made for premises to be registered as milkshops or dairies, of which 10 were granted. There are now 130 cowsheds and milkshops on the register.

All these have been visited by the Assistant Inspector or myself, and notices given to the occupiers where breaches of the regulations were found to exist. The absence of suitable manure receptacles in connection with the sheds in the rural part of the district, and the keeping of large masses of manure on the surface of the yard adjoining the cowshed is unfortunately still very rife.

On one occasion the Assistant Inspector reported that a milking cow was in a very emaciated state. Acting on the authorisation of the Medical Officer of Health, and in pursuance of Section 80 of the West Bromwich Corporation Act, 1900, I visited the shed, together with the Veterinary Surgeon of the Corporation. The latter found that the temperature of the cow in question was very high, and advised that the tuberculin

test should be applied. The occupier was not willing for this course to be taken, but undertook not to sell milk from the cow. Shortly afterwards the cow was sent to a knacker's yard for destruction, and we discovered the animal had been suffering from tuberculosis.

INSPECTION OF COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

No new licenses for common lodging houses have been granted during the year, but renewals were granted with respect to the three already on the list. These places are regularly visited by the District Inspectors or myself, 527 visits in all having been paid. No cases of notifiable infectious disease were reported in connection with any of the lodging houses.

INSPECTION OF CANAL BOATS.

The number of canal boats inspected—354—has again exceeded all previous records. Infringements of the Act or regulations were as follows:—Absence of Registration, 2 cases; insufficient marking, 2 cases; overcrowding, 8 cases; non-removal of bilge water, 4 cases; dilapidations, 9 cases. Twenty-one notices were despatched to owners, and in 17 cases the requisitions of the notices had been complied with, correspondence in the four remaining cases taking place at the end of the year.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

Permission was granted for the establishment of a new offensive trade, viz., fat melting at Golds Hill, after the premises had been inspected by a Sub-Committee, several suggestions made by me as to the disposal of fumes being adopted by the occupiers.

I have visited from time to time both these and other works which come under the Offensive Trades Sections of the Public Health Act, 1875.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Two hundred and seven cases of infectious disease were investigated in detail. The Typhoid Fever cases, which were nursed at home, were frequently re-visited, in order to impress on occupiers the necessity for disinfection of stools, etc.

Two hundred and forty-two rooms were fumigated after removal or convalescence of patients, and I also superintended the fumigation of wards at the District and Infectious Diseases Hospitals, as well as at Park Village Schools.

REMOVAL OF NIGHTSOIL AND REFUSE.

Notwithstanding the diminution in the number of privies and middens, the number of emptyings of middens and ashpits has increased from 6,461 to 6,709, so that the period of storage of excreta must be reduced. The whole of the privies are now inspected by the staff after being emptied. The cost of removal of nightsoil was £3,045 0s. 4d., as compared with £3,080 13s. 6d. in 1905.

The number of dustbins emptied weekly is 5,130, of which the Council's staff remove 2,710, at a total cost of £446 10s. 1d., as compared with £450 6s. in 1905.

The total amount expended during the year for nightsoil and refuse removal was £3,491 10s. 5d. as compared with £3,535 19s. 6d. in 1905, and £3,738 3s. 7d. in 1904, the cost of removal having therefore been reduced £247 13s. 2d. in the two years.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

H. H. SPEARS, Assoc. Royal San. Inst.,
Chief Sanitary Inspector.

January, 1907.

TABLE I.

House-to-house and miscellaneous inspections, including inspections of common yards and houses concerning which complaints have been received	9482
Re-inspections	4145
Visits to slaughter-houses	1761
„ „ dairies, cowsheds and milkshops	224
„ „ shops, butchers	2019
„ „ „ fish, game and poultry	644
„ „ bakehouses, etc.	108
„ „ common lodging houses... ..	527
„ „ fat melting works, etc.	13
Number of canal boats inspected... ..	354
Cases of infectious disease visited and reported on...	207
Other visits in connection with cases of infectious disease	107
Number of privies, etc., inspected and reported for emptying by staff	2260
Number of privies, etc., re-inspected after emptying	4211
Sundry visits	1151
<hr/>	
Total number of inspections and visits	27213
<hr/>	
Number of preliminary notices served	1506
„ statutory notices served	179
„ legal proceedings taken	5
„ letters written to owners <i>re</i> nuisances ...	339
Notices served under Canal Boats Acts	21
Reports sent to Surveyor <i>re</i> dangerous buildings, etc.	46
Reports sent to Water Company <i>re</i> wastes of water...	137
Number of rooms disinfected	242
Number of reports sent to schools <i>re</i> infectious diseases	81
Samples of water taken for analysis	9
Number of drains tested	8

TABLE II.

PRELIMINARY NOTICES SERVED AND NUMBER OF
HOUSES IN CONNECTION WITH NOTICES.

			Notices served.	Houses in connection with Notices.
Filthy and dilapidated houses	...	...	179	355
Filthy and dilapidated outhouses	...	...	68	260
Defective paving and surface channels	...	...	33	101
Defective eaves and downspouting	...	...	44	168
Insufficient drainage	...	...	22	37
Foul, untrapped drainage	...	...	8	22
Choked drainage and W.C.'s	...	...	84	292
Insufficient privy accommodation	...	...	5	9
Insufficient ashpit accommodation	...	...	94	209
Foul, wet, and open middens	...	...	143	357
Defective W.C. Connections	...	...	143	431
Filthy state of sanitary conveniences	...	...	511	511
Overcrowded houses or rooms	...	...	44	44
Animals improperly kept	...	...	57	57
Offensive accumulations	...	...	26	43
Water in cellars	...	...	8	16
Insufficient water supply	...	...	4	13
Houses unfit for Habitation	...	...	1	1
Bakehouses	...	...	2	2
Workshops	...	...	1	1
Dairies and cowsheds	...	...	6	6
Polluted wells...	...	...	5	12
Miscellaneous	...	...	9	16
Dangerous wells or cisterns	...	...	9	19
			<hr/>	<hr/>
	Totals		1506	2982

TABLE III.

SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS CARRIED OUT IN
DISTRICT IN PURSUANCE OF INSPECTIONS
MADE AND NOTICES SERVED.

Interior of Houses—

Filthy houses cleansed and whitewashed	...	225
Houses in which repairs to plastering, brickwork or woodwork have been carried out	... ..	79
Flooded cellars drained or filled in	... ..	6
Houses without sufficient means of ventilation, window openings, and means of ventilation provided	... ..	3

Exterior of Houses—

Defective roofs made watertight	... ..	35
Houses without eaves, spouting, or with choked or defective spouting—new spouting provided or existing spouting cleansed and repaired	... ..	73
Damp external walls. Brickwork repaired or covered with impervious coating	... ..	3
Dangerous chimneys repaired	... ..	21

Yards and Outbuildings—

Surface paving in yards provided, renewed, or repaired	... ..	24
Dangerous wells or cisterns filled in or suitable coverings provided	... ..	26
New earthenware sinks provided in lieu of old brick sinks	... ..	14
Filthy and dilapidated outbuildings cleansed and repaired	... ..	93

Drainage—

Absence of or insufficient drainage. Premises drained and connected to sewer or cesspool	...	20
Surface channels abolished and stoneware pipe drains provided	... ..	130
Defective drainage relaid or repaired	... ..	12

Number of manhole inspection chambers provided				
to drainage systems	...	...	...	142
Additional gullies fixed	...	...	...	386
Choked drains opened and cleansed	...	...	...	71
Foul untrapped drains. Stoneware gully traps				
fixed	...	...	...	9

Privies, Water-closets, and Ashpits—

Privies abolished	368
Middens abolished	...	...	...	...	211
Dry ashpits abolished and dustbins substituted	...	...	...	...	26
Dumb wells abolished. Premises connected to					
sewer	...	...	...	...	2
Water-closets with flush cisterns substituted for					
privies	...	...	...	...	386
Fresh water-closets substituted for waste water-					
closets	...	...	...	...	1
Foul, wet and open privy-middens filled in, covered					
and ventilated	...	...	...	...	2
Additional water-closets provided	...	...	...	...	5
Dilapidated privies and ashpits repaired	...	...	...	...	18
Percolations of faecal matter from privies, etc.,					
privies cemented	...	...	...	...	30
Galvanised dustbins provided in lieu of middens	...	...	...	...	280
Additional ashbins provided	...	...	...	...	153
Middens abolished and converted into dry ashpits	...	...	...	...	16
Choked water-closets opened and cleansed	...	...	...	...	138
Defective W.C. connections made good	...	...	...	...	101
Insufficient supply of water to W.C.'s. Flush					
improved	...	...	...	...	10
Defective tippers renewed and inspection chambers					
provided to waste water-closets	...	...	...	...	8

Keeping of Animals and Offensive Accumulations—

Nuisances from the keeping of swine abated	...	4
Fowls or other poultry kept in dwelling houses or		
so as to be a nuisance—removed from premises	...	37
Offensive accumulations removed from premises...	...	23

Overcrowding—

Houses overcrowded—numbers reduced...	...	44
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Miscellaneous—

Manure pits provided or repaired	2
Miscellaneous nuisances abated	15
Filthy approaches to privies cleansed by occupiers			17
Vans removed out of district	...	...	3

Water Supply—

Houses without a proper supply of drinking water—water laid on	...	...	...	37
Polluted wells closed and water laid on from main				3

Factory and Workshops Act—

Filthy and dilapidated bakehouses cleansed or repaired	...	...	...	...	...	12
Closet accommodation provided	...	...				1

Dairies and Cowsheds—

Cowsheds provided with sufficient means of ventilation	...	...	...	...	1
Cowsheds re-drained or drains repaired...				...	1
Dairy accommodation provided			...	...	7
Dairies cleansed and limewashed			...	...	3
			Total	...	<hr/> 3337

TABLE IV.—RESULTS OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

Situation of Premises	Nature of Complaint	Act under which proceedings instituted	Result
Nos. 54 to 72, Witton Lane	Choked drainage	Public Health Act, 1875, Sec. 94	Case adjourned on three occasions to permit execution of work, when summons withdrawn on payment of costs, 5s.
Nos. 4 to 14, Grout St., and 1 to 5, Grout St.	Choked state of sanitary conveniences used in common	Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, Sec. 21	Case adjourned to permit execution of work; closet opened, and occupiers ordered to pay costs, 6s. each.
Nos. 43 to 53, Swan Village	Dirty and dilapidated state of houses and defective paving	Public Health Act, 1875, Sec. 94	Case adjourned at defendant's request on two occasions when work not being completed, order made for execution of work and payment of costs, £1 16s. 6d.
No. 88, Greet's Green Rd.	Choked drainage	Do. do.	Case adjourned on one occasion; drain opened and defendant having paid costs, 6s., summons withdrawn.
Nos. 236 to 242, Beeches Road	Insufficient flush to water-closets	Do. do.	Case adjourned on three occasions, defendant having executed work and paid costs, 17s. 6d., summons withdrawn.

Food and Drugs Inspector's Report,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 1906.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

Herewith I beg to submit a Report of the work carried out under the Sale of the Food and Drugs Acts during the year ended December 31st, 1906.

I have obtained 145 samples under the provisions of the above Acts, consisting of the following:—New Milk, 68; Skim Milk, 2; Butter, 36; Margarine, 3; Coffee, 9; Coffee Mixture, 1; Pepper, 5; Ginger, 2; Meat, 5; Brandy, 2; Whisky, 9; Rum, 2; Gin, 1.

These were all submitted to and were analysed by the Public Analyst, who certified 125 samples (86.21 per cent.) as “genuine,” 16 samples (11.03 per cent.) as “inferior,” and 4 samples (2.76 per cent.) as “adulterated.”

The inferior samples were all milks.

The adulterated samples consisted of 3 milks and 1 coffee.

The adulterated sample of coffee was obtained unofficially by an agent, and upon obtaining a further sample by the same agent in an official manner, a genuine sample of coffee was supplied.

Proceedings were taken against the vendor (a retailer), also the agent who sold one of the adulterated milk samples.

A warranty was produced in defence, but as its identity with the sample sold was not established, a conviction was obtained.

The vendor was fined £5 and £2 2s. costs, and his agent was fined 2s. 6d. and 10s. 6d. costs.

Proceedings were also taken against the vendors (farmers) of the remaining two adulterated milk samples, and it was argued at length, during several hearings, on behalf of the defendants, that the milk was sold in the same state as produced by the cow. This was not sufficiently proved to the satisfaction of the Court, and the defendants were each fined 20s., the costs in one case amounting to £5 0s. 6d., and in the other to £4 18s.

In the appended table I give particulars of the nature, number and quality of the articles examined.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

GEO. WM. DAVIS,

Inspector.

SUMMARY.

Nature of Food or Drug	No. of Samples Analysed	Genuine	Inferior	Adulterated	Prosecuted	Convicted	Amount of Penalty			Amount of Costs			Remarks
							£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
New Milk ...	68	49	16	3	4	4	7	2	6	12	11	0	7%, 11%, 11% deficient of its butter fat.
Skim Milk ..	2	2											
Butter ...	36	36											
Margarine ...	3	3											
Coffee ...	9	8	...	1									
Coffee Mixture	1	1											
Pepper ...	5	5											
Ground Ginger	2	2											
Tinned Meat ...	5	5											
Brandy ...	2	2											
Whisky ...	9	9											
Rum ...	2	2											
Gin ...	1	1											
	145	125	16	4	4	4	7	2	6	12	11	0	

Analyst's Report,

*To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee,
County Borough of West Bromwich.*

GENTLEMEN,

Herewith I beg to submit my Annual Report on the work carried out under the Food and Drugs Acts during the year 1906.

The total number of samples submitted to me for analysis was 145, or five more than in the previous year, when 140 articles were reported on.

In accordance with a suggestion of the Local Government Board, a portion of these samples, namely 30, were "unofficially" purchased, that is, the notification to the vendor as to the articles being required for the purpose of analysis, and other formalities at the time of sale were omitted. The Board are of opinion that by utilising the services of an ordinary purchaser after this manner, there are greater possibilities for the detection of fraud.

From the records contained in the table given below, it will be observed that of the 30 "unofficial" samples, only one was found to be adulterated, representing a percentage of 2.9, and of the 115 "official" samples, three, or a percentage of 2.6, were condemned, the amount of adulteration in each group being practically the same.

In the table given below will be found a summary stating the number and kind of articles examined during the year. The samples are divided into three classes, according to their quality, viz. :—

- (1) Genuine, and of good quality.
- (2) Genuine, complying with the necessarily low official limits, but of poor quality.
- (3) Adulterated.

Description of Article	Total Number of Samples	Samples Officially Purchased	Samples Unofficially Purchased	Genuine Samples	Genuine Samples, but of Poor Quality	Adulterated Samples		Total Adulterated Samples
						Officially Taken	Unofficially Taken	
Milk ...	68	68	...	49	16	3	...	3
Skim Milk ...	2	2	...	2				
Butter ...	36	22	14	36				
Margarine ...	3	...	3	3				
Coffee ...	9	2	7	8	...	...	1	1
Coffee Mixture	1	...	1	1				
Pepper ...	5	5	...	5				
Ginger ...	2	2	...	2				
Canned Meat ...	5	...	5	5				
Brandy ...	2	2	...	2				
Whisky ...	9	9	...	9				
Rum ...	2	2	...	2				
Gin ...	1	1	...	1				
	145	115	30	125	16	3	1	4

The number of articles returned as adulterated was 4, which, calculating on the whole of the samples analysed, represents the low percentage of 2.75 for other than genuine foods.

In the year 1904, the amount of adulteration was practically the same; for 1905 it was rather lower, being 2.14 per cent. These small percentages for the past three years may, I think, be regarded as strong evidence of the value of a vigorous and systematic application of the Food and Drugs Acts in obtaining a good food supply.

Throughout England and Wales during the year 1905, the last complete return available, 86,182 samples were analysed, and 7,099, or a percentage of 8.2, were condemned.

In the following table, a list of the adulterated articles is given, with particulars as to the nature and extent of the sophistication.

Description of Article	Nature and extent of Adulteration	Remarks
Coffee— (Sample 879)	Contained 28 per cent. of Chicory.	Unofficial Sample. No action.
Milk— (Sample 883)	Deficient of 11 per cent. of its butter fat.	Owner fined £5 0 0 & £2 2 0 costs Man fined 2 6 10 6 „ £5 2 6 £2 12 6
Milk— (Sample 895)	Deficient of 7 per cent. of its butter fat.	Vendor fined £1 and £5 0s. 6d. costs.
Milk— (Sample 896)	Deficient of 11 per cent. of its natural fat.	Vendor fined £1 and £4 0 6 costs. Paid costs 12 0 on false warranty £4 12 6 summons.

Milk and butter, as in former years, were responsible for three-fourths of the samples submitted by the Inspector. Forty-nine milks were of good average quality; sixteen complied with the regulations of the Board of Agriculture, but were of poor quality, whilst three were condemned. As regards the adulterated samples, prosecutions were instituted in each case, and convictions followed. In two instances, the correctness of my certificate was challenged by the defending solicitor and a request was made for the reference samples to be forwarded to the Government Laboratory. This course was followed, and the accuracy of my reports was upheld by the referees, the vendors being fined by the Stipendiary at the adjourned hearing.

In July, 1906, a circular was received from the Local Government Board, calling attention to the addition of preservatives to milk, and pointing out that apart from any direct injury resulting from the chemicals themselves, their use was objectionable, as it protected those engaged in the milk traffic “against the immediate results of the neglect of scrupulous cleanliness. Under the influence of these preservatives, milk may be exposed, without sensible injury, to conditions that

would render it unsaleable. It may remain sweet to taste and smell, and yet have incorporated disease germs of various kinds, whereof the activity may be suspended for a time by the action of the preservatives, but may be resumed before the milk is digested."

The preservatives most commonly added to milk are Boron compounds, such as Borax and Boracic Acid, and also formalin. Shortly after the receipt of the circular, samples were taken from the wholesale dealers consigning milk to your Borough, and preservatives were carefully looked for in the supply. The weather at the time of the investigation was hot, and consequently the conditions for the addition of chemicals were favourable. No preservatives, however, were detected, and the examination of all subsequent samples has given similar negative results.

On June 20th, 1906, a circular was received from the Local Government Board calling attention to the scare with reference to the quality of American "canned" meat goods, arising from the publication of a novel called "The Jungle," which purported to deal with the conditions under which these goods were prepared and packed in America. It was requested that samples of these foods should be taken and that they should be examined as to general soundness, and various preservatives and foreign colouring matter should also be looked for. In accordance with these suggestions, five samples, representing the produce of some of the largest American firms engaged in this trade, were submitted to me by Mr. Davis.

I was unable to detect the presence of any preservative or foreign colouring matter, and the goods had every appearance of being sound and sweet.

In addition to the work under the Acts, ten samples of water were reported on, and all were condemned as unsafe to use for drinking purposes, owing to contamination with sewage or animal matter.

I remain, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

HARRY SILVESTER, B.Sc., F.I.C.
(Public Analyst.)

